

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SP-02 USIA-06 AID-05 EB-08 NSC-05

TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00

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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

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AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON, EALR, EIND, ELTN, ENRG, EQIP, UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET INDUSTRIAL GROWTH RATE IS FLAT AT SEVEN MONTHS

1. SEVEN-MONTH STATISTICS SHOW THAT SOVIET INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION ROSE BY 5.5 PERCENT COMPARED WITH THE SAME PERIOD IN 1976, AND LABOR PRODUCTIVITY, 4 PERCENT. BOTH REPRESENT SLIGHT DECLINES FROM MID-YEAR AND ARE BELOW PLAN, BUT ALL INDUSTRIAL MINISTRIES MET THEIR PLAN GOALS EVEN THOUGH IT WAS A NEAR THING FOR CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS AND BOTH FERROUS AND NON-FERROUS METALLURGY. IN ENERGY OIL OUTPUT GREW BY 5 PERCENT, MAINTAINING ITS MID-YEAR RATE, BUT GAS DROPPED A BIT, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO 7.6 PERCENT. THE STEEL SECTOR WAS ESSENTIALLY FLAT COMPARED BOTH WITH LAST YEAR AND LAST MONTH. MOST OTHER INDUSTRIAL ITEMS GREW OVER LAST YEAR BUT REGISTERED SEASONAL DECLINES COMPARED WITH JUNE. THE OUTPUT OF RAILWAY FREIGHT CARS REACHED ONLY 4.9 THOUSAND, DOWN FROM 5.7 A YEAR AGO AND 6.1 IN JULY, AND THAT PRESAGES FURTHER PROBLEMS FOR RAIL TRANSPORT IN THE MONTHS

AHEAD.

2. ALTHOUGH MANY OF THE MACHINE BUILDING MINISTRIES ACHIEVED HIGH GROWTH RATES FOR BOTH TOTAL OUTPUT AND LABOR PRODUCTIVITY, NOT ALL ENTERPRISES DID. THEIR SHORTFALLS IN BOTH OUTPUT AND RANGE OF PRODUCTS ARE "IMPEDING THE COMPLETION" OF THIS YEAR'S OBJECTIVES, ACCORDING TO EKONOMICHESKAYA GAZETA. SOME PART OF THESE PROBLEMS HARKS BACK TO SHORTFALLS IN THE METALLURGY SECTOR WHICH, FOR EXAMPLE, IS NOW 700 THOUSAND TONS BEHIND IN ITS SUPPLYING OF HIGHER QUALITY AND MORE ECONOMICAL TYPES OF METAL PRODUCTS.

3. SOVIET COMMENTARIES APPEAR IN EKONOMICHESKAYA GAZETA NO. 34, SOTSIALISTICHESKAYA INDUSTRIYA AND TRUD FOR AUGUST 13 AND SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA FOR AUGUST 14.

4. COMMENT: FROM THE LOOKS OF LAST YEAR'S STASTICS, WE CAN EXPECT A SIMILAR PERFORMANCE IN AUGUST, WHICH, LIKE JULY, IS A MAJOR VACATION MONTH, WITH LITTLE GROWTH COMPARED TO JULY AND ABOUT THE SAME RATE OF GROWTH AS FOR THE FIRST EIGHT MONTHS OF LAST YEAR.
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